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Helping Organizations Retain Their Most Valuable Asset

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### Barbecue Safety Tips

- Before using a grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line. Make sure the venturi tubes - where the air and gas mix - are not blocked.
- Do not overfill the propane tank.
- Do not wear loose clothing while cooking at a barbecue.
- Be careful when using lighter fluid. Do not add fluid to an already lit fire because the flames can flashback up into the container and explode.
- Keep all matches and lighters away from children. Teach your children to report any loose matches or lighters to an adult immediately. Supervise children around outdoor grills.
- Dispose of hot coals properly - douse them with plenty of water, and stir them to ensure that the fire is out. Never place them in plastic, paper or wooden containers.
- Never grill/barbecue in enclosed areas - carbon monoxide could be produced.
- Make sure everyone knows to Stop, Drop and Roll in case a piece of clothing does catch fire. Call 911 or your local emergency number if a burn warrants serious medical attention.

Source: [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)



## Creating Special Family Time

A study published in the Journal of Marital and Family Therapy reports that couples who are successful at balancing work and family maintain a commitment to family as their highest priority.

Through their planning and actions, both members of the couple work hard to maintain family as their highest priority in making decisions about their behavior in daily life. To do this, couples proactively create opportunities for family time, which often involve family rituals, routines, and special family time, such as:

- "Pizza night" every Friday
- Attending soccer games
- Bedtime stories

Below are more suggestions on how to create special times for family:

### Tips for creating and enjoying special family time

1. Schedule time for family activities. With all of the responsibilities that come with work, raising a family and running a household, families must be deliberate about spending time together. Make family time a priority by planning ahead and adding family time to your monthly calendar.
2. Eat together regularly. Meals are opportunities for communication and unity. Turn off the television and allow the answering machine to answer the phone and give your family your full attention. You will help your family

get the most out this time by actively listening to your children and praising and encouraging each other. Active listening instills trust and self-worth in children.

3. Plan family outings. Go on family hikes, drives and picnics. Go to a park or watch a high school or youth sporting event. Go to local concerts, movies, the zoo or museums. Visit family and friends together. Let children plan some trips to encourage their involvement.
4. Play games together. Turn off the television and video games at least once a week and play games one-on-one, or as a family. Play outside if weather permits.
5. Share hobbies and interests. Activities like cooking, collecting, crafts, fishing or biking open the door to greater involvement and family time. Hobbies are a great way to spend more time with teens and to create opportunities to listen and talk with them. Spending hobby time with children encourages learning and skill development.
6. Make household chores a shared family event. Work in the yard together, wash the car together, or clean the kitchen together. If chores are a shared family event they foster teamwork and create family-time opportunities in addition to reducing a parent's workload. Plus, giving children chores will help them learn responsibility and a sense of self-worth.

*HMS is here to help*

7. Other ideas:

- Family movie night
- Walking the dogs after dinner
- Reading together at bedtime or other times
- Taking a family picture for the holidays

Remember, Human Management Services (HMS) can help you – or your dependents – with any type of personal, family or work-related concern. If you are concerned about a particularly difficult family or parenting issue, or need help improving your work/life balance, HMS can help you with professional counseling, referrals or information. All HMS services are FREE and strictly CONFIDENTIAL. Why not call a professional HMS counselor today? We're here to help

*Relationships: Nurturing Your Marriage...*

According to a study published in Developmental Psychology, the first 10 years of marriage has its ups and downs, and marital distress could improve if couples know to expect those declines. The study reports evidence of two sets of normative declines in marital quality. The first decline happens during the early years of marriage, typically referred to as the "honeymoon is over" effect. The second decline happens at about the eighth year of marriage, the period commonly referred to as the "seven year itch" period. The study concludes that the severity of some instances of marital distress might be lessened by spouses' being prepared for "normal" periods of decline in marital quality.

*Marriage improvement tips*

The following are some simple – but not easy – techniques to help you improve the quality of your marriage:

- Make your marriage a priority. The art of relating is a never-ending process. It doesn't come naturally and has to be learned. There are always challenges as well as joys.
- Treat your partner with as much politeness, respect and importance as you would a stranger, business contact or friend. Make appointments to get together and keep them.
- Don't avoid relationship challenges. Face them head on. Learning to get through adversity will make your marriage stronger.
- When something isn't working in your relationship, make a plan and agree how you will both handle the situation. Make adjustments when needed.
- Take responsibility for your own behavior instead of trying to change the other person. You have no control over your partner's behavior, you can only change yourself.
- Ask for what you want assertively. Learn the difference between commands and requests. Use them appropriately to get your needs met.
- Give yourself permission to get outside help when necessary.

*HMS is here to help*

If you are concerned about a particularly difficult marital or relationship issue, contact Human Management Services (HMS) and speak with a professional HMS counselor. HMS is always available to help you or your dependents with any personal, family or work-related concern. All HMS services are FREE and strictly CONFIDENTIAL. Why not call an HMS counselor today? We're here to help.

**HMS SERVICES**

**PROVIDED BY YOUR  
EMPLOYER FOR YOU AND  
YOUR DEPENDENTS**

This confidential prepaid program is designed to help employees and their eligible dependents resolve problems which may be interfering with their personal, work or home life. HMS offers help for marital and family issues, substance abuse, job concerns, emotional problems, life adjustments, legal issues, financial matters, and elder care and child care referrals.

If you're experiencing problems which are causing concern, you and your HMS counselor can work as a team to find solutions.

Call HMS for Help:

24 Hours a day: 800-343-2186

[www.hmsincorp.com](http://www.hmsincorp.com)

